

societies. To be sure, Armenians themselves are committed to the proposition that their experience has meaning for all of us—it must not remain the special province of the survivors. In other words, to ignore or forget the past is to remain its captive, and coming to terms with the past is an indispensable part of building for the future.

Elie Wiesel, speaking at a Holocaust memorial service here in the Congress during the early 1980's, expressed eloquently the importance of recognizing the Armenian genocide when he said:

Before the planning of the final solution, Hitler asked, "Who remembers the Armenians?" He was right. No one remembered them, as no one remembered the Jews. Rejected by everyone, they felt expelled from history.

From the darkness of this experience, Armenians have risen to demonstrate great courage and strength in their pursuit of human dignity and freedom. After enduring years of struggle under Soviet rule the Armenians gained independence at last. They now face the effects of a devastating earthquake in 1988, an inhumane economic blockade which continues to hamper the delivery of needed humanitarian assistance, and the hostile forces arrayed against them in their volatile area of the world.

Perhaps the Armenian-American community is one of the best examples of this indomitable human spirit of the Armenian people. The contribution of the Armenian community to the cultural, social, economic, and political life of America is a source of great strength and vitality in our Nation. Americans of Armenian origin have kept alive, and not let tragedy shatter, the rich faith and traditions of Armenian civilization.

Mr. President, in keeping with our country's highest principles and ideals, we pause and pay tribute today to the survivors and the victims who perished in the midst of a deliberate attempt to rid the world of the entire nation. As we recall the events that began on the night of April 24, 1915, we are reminded yet again of the fundamental importance of freedom and respect for human rights, and of the terrible consequences of their abuse.

I ask unanimous consent that a recent column appearing in the New York Times entitled "For Old Armenians, April is the Cruellest Memory" be printed in the RECORD at this point.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Apr. 19, 1995]

FOR OLD ARMENIANS, APRIL IS THE CRUELEST MEMORY

(By Michael T. Kaufman)

The forsythia at the Armenian Home in Flushing are blooming cheerily and the dandelions wink from the lawn, but for the old people who live there, April remains a time of heavy sorrows. They sit silently in sunny rooms, keeping to themselves what they saw and heard and smelled 80 years ago when their people were scattered and killed in the first of the century's many genocides.

"We don't talk to each other about it because everybody has their own terrible stories," said Alice Dosdourian, who is 89 years old. They also no longer go to the commemorative gatherings, such as the one to be held this Sunday in Times Square, where younger people mark the years of Armenian agony that began when the Turks killed 235 intellectuals on April 24, 1915. The home's administrators say the memorials were too upsetting for the residents.

"But I never forget," Mrs. Dosdourian said. "I think about what happened all the time. Sometimes I dream about it and I wake up and I hold myself and tell myself, 'No, you do not have to worry, now you are in America.'" Mrs. Dosdourian has been in America since 1924.

But if the old Armenians discreetly avoided making each other cry, they eagerly took advantage of a stranger's visit to tell what they had seen and endured as children. They are, after all, among the last ones alive who had seen the horrors with their own eyes. They need to reveal their recollections to those who were not there, not to seek redress or make politics, but simply to have the facts acknowledged. And so, one after another, the Armenians clasped a stranger's arm and testified.

Mrs. Dosdourian had been born in Mazhdvan, a village in that part of Turkey where the Armenians had lived for many centuries. She was 6 years old in 1915 when soldiers came and took away her father, a shoemaker. She never saw him again. "My mother took me and my brother, who was 12, and we walked. We went from village to village. We went to the mountains. I do not know how many months we walked. Once we were in a village where all the men were Armenian heroes, big men who fought until they died. But then the soldiers came and made us walk again."

There were more than a million who walked, mostly women, children and old men forced across Mesopotamian deserts into Syria. Many drowned and died of hunger. Some, like Mrs. Dosdourian's brother, were shot to death during the exodus. In all, the estimates of the dead ranged between 600,000 and 1.5 million. Until World War II and the destruction of the Jews, it was the sufferings of the Armenians, well documented by journalists and writers, that set standards of horror and contemporary barbarism.

"Every night," Mrs. Dosdourian said, "I heard people shouting that they were robbed by the gendarmes. We were always hungry. People were dying and we had no shovels to bury them. People stayed up at night to protect bodies from dogs and wild animals. People sang out to God, 'How could you let this happen to us?'" The woman spoke unhesitatingly, sitting erect and keeping her clear blue eyes on her listener.

"One day we came to a river. There were many dead around but in the water there was the body of a young woman floating. I could see her long black hair spread out like a beautiful fan." She shuddered and her clear blue eyes filled with tears.

Annahid Verdian also remembers. She was 4 years old when she was forced from her home with her mother and her father. She and her nurse became separated from the others. At one river she watched as a ferry full of people was turned over. She thinks her family may have been on the boat and drowned. She was adopted by people, some good, some exploitative. She worked as a maid, as a seamstress. She went to Greece and then to Marseille, and then in 1934 she came to Massachusetts, where she worked in textile mills.

Hagop Cividian, who is 86, did not come here until 1990. In French and German he explains his story. With difficulty he talks

about a woman named Diana, saying it is important to remember her because she was a real hero. He has written her story but only in Armenian. "Americans should know," he said with passion. "She was an American." She was married to his cousin and they had a 7-year-old boy who was a prodigy on the piano. "The authorities told her that because she was American she could go but she would have to leave the boy," Mr. Cividian said. "She stayed and died with her husband and son."

Mr. Cividian managed to live. "For four years I was hungry, and beaten," said the stocky and still muscular man. Later he made his way to Romania, where he became a chemical engineer. "As a child I saw the Turks kill the Armenians, later I saw Hitler and then Ceaucescu," Mr. Cividian said. "The only time I knew freedom was when I came to America five years ago. Only here I can do what I want. I can think, speak and remember."

IS CONGRESS IRRESPONSIBLE? THE VOTERS HAVE SAID YES

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the impression simply will not go away; the enormous Federal debt greatly resembles that well-known energizer bunny we see, and see, and see on television. The Federal debt keeps going and going and going—always at the expense, of course, of the American taxpayers.

A lot of politicians talk a good game—when they go home to campaign about bringing Federal deficits and the Federal debt under control. But so many of these same politicians regularly voted for one bloated spending bill after another during the 103d Congress, which could have been a primary factor in the new configuration of U.S. Senators as a result of last November's elections.

In any event, Mr. President, as of yesterday, as of Friday, April 21, at the close of business, the total Federal debt stood—down to the penny—at exactly \$4,837,382,183,299.27 or \$18,362.79 per person.

FATHER ROBERT J. FOX

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I am pleased to pay tribute to an outstanding South Dakotan and good friend, Father Robert J. Fox of Alexandria, SD. Today, April 24, 1995, marks the 40th year of his dedicated service to the Catholic church and the people of South Dakota.

It has been my personal pleasure to work with Father Robert over the past 6 years in establishing National Children's Day. As national chairman of National Children's Day activities for the Catholic church, he has tirelessly promoted this special day for our children. As a result of his efforts, I expect to see National Children's Day successfully celebrated on the second Sunday of October for many years to come.

Father Robert Fox began his pastoral career at the age of 27 after graduating from St. Paul Seminary school. A little over a year later, on April 24, 1955, he was ordained into the priesthood, and gave his first sermon soon afterward at